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## **Energy Planning and Regulatory Improvements Highlight Atlantic Energy Ministers' Meeting**

Sydney Mines, NS – Atlantic Canada's four energy ministers are working on plans to increase security and sustainability of energy supply in the region. At a meeting today in Sydney Mines the four ministers addressed a broad range of issues centred around regional energy cooperation.

The meeting was hosted by Nova Scotia Minister Cecil Clarke. The meeting was chaired by Jamie Ballem, Minister of Environment and Energy for Prince Edward Island, and attended by Ed Byrne, Minister of Mines and Energy, Newfoundland and Labrador; and the Honourable Bruce Fitch, Minister of Energy, New Brunswick.

"Cooperation means working together to address our own challenges" said Minister Clarke. "It also means taking a common approach to dealing with Ottawa. Today's discussions identified how we can move forward together with our federal counterparts in a positive way."

Key energy topics raised by the four ministers include:

- Climate change
- Regional cooperation on electricity markets and generation
- Encouraging offshore exploration by eliminating tariffs on drilling rigs and addressing the uncertainties surrounding offshore boundaries in the Gulf of St. Lawrence
- Building energy supply through LNG and CNG technologies
- Support for Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador in their efforts to become the principal beneficiary of their offshore resources

"Meeting future energy needs in a manner that is both economically and environmentally sustainable is a priority for Prince Edward Island, as it is for our Atlantic counterparts," said Minister Ballem. "Today's meeting marked another important step in exploring ways we can all benefit by taking a cooperative approach to address our shared challenges and opportunities in the energy sector."

These key areas drew the following comments:

#### Climate Change

Atlantic ministers are taking a lead to address climate change and see a strong role for renewables and energy efficiency. To achieve this goal, there is a need for clarity from the federal government with respect to further development of the federal climate change plan and how that plan will impact the respective jurisdictions.

"I am pleased that all ministers recognize the significant contribution renewable energy developments including wind and hydro electricity (in particular projects like the Lower Churchill) and a suite of energy efficient opportunities can play in addressing climate change," said Minister Byrne. "We will pursue appropriate recognition for these in subsequent discussions with the federal government on climate change."

#### Principal Beneficiary

The Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador ministers discussed the importance of continuing to work with the federal government to maximize the economic potential from the provinces' natural resources to ensure that continued investment is made towards long-term growth, exploration and development.

#### Boundary

The ministers agreed to further discussion on establishing a process to develop a clear set of administrative boundary lines and related regulatory regimes would represent an important step toward providing industry with the predictable regulatory framework that it requires.

#### Import Tarrifs

The ministers also agreed to encourage Ottawa to proceed quickly with the proposed moratorium on import duties on mobile drilling rigs.

#### LNG/CNG

To ensure availability and accessibility in the region, ministers recognized that both Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) as viable options that could support infrastructure development and augment gas supply.

#### Electricity

The high levels of demand and challenges faced by adding new generation have led the ministers to move forward on establishing a regional approach.

"With its ties to PEI, NS, Quebec and Maine, New Brunswick is positioned on the grid as an integral part of a regional plan for transmission and generation," said Minister Fitch.

The ministers agreed to establish a working group to report back on electricity issues in late spring, including regional electricity marketplace issues, future generation requirements, transmission infrastructure development, renewable energy and demand side management.

As chair, Minister Ballem said he will be contacting the federal government to arrange a meeting of the four Atlantic energy ministers and the appropriate federal ministers. The Atlantic ministers will request federal Environment Minister David Anderson to join them at the Atlantic Energy Roundtable on oil and gas - a federal-provincial partnership with industry and regulators on offshore oil and gas issues.

Atlantic Canada premiers at their meeting in Corner Brook on February 12 encouraged the energy ministers to look at opportunities for greater regional cooperation on energy policy. The energy ministers will be reporting back to the Council of Atlantic Premiers on their progress.

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